The Interspecies Newsletter

Spring

Published Quarterly by Interspecies Communication Inc.

1990

For Earthday

I- Carnival Mirrors

Whereas wildness was once central to a human being's daily apprehension of the world, now it is reduced to the margins of our lives. Call it perceptual extinction. Our biomepsychosis.

Over time we forget what we lost. You can read the signs of this loss (this losing) in the language. Regard, for example, the culture's bent to perceive of natural resources as a valid synonym for wildness. Or that the prevailing educational system teaches our children to preclude words of feeling and equality – words like intuition, love, participation, magic, and communion – whenever they draw close to observe the wild animals. Let's get personal. Do you believe that words like *studying* and *researching* are viable synonyms for *relating* and *experiencing*? How does that preference influence the way you dispose of your tin cans?

Psychologists warn us that language reflects perception and vice versa. For example, the marriage of perception and language partially explains the consequences of a wilderness policy molded by urbane men of power debating legislation inside artificially-lit rooms. These are well educated people who, just like the rest of us, are taught to believe that nature is essentially a resource – our resource – and who regard the human (read, national) relationship to nature as a body of quantifiable information of which they are not actually an integral part. But is that a healthy way to perceive nature? As quantities and information?

Echoes reverberate through the halls of congress assuring us in plain language that, yes, certainly, those are precisely the measures our system of government uses to determine wilderness legislation. How else could we do it? Anybody have a better idea?

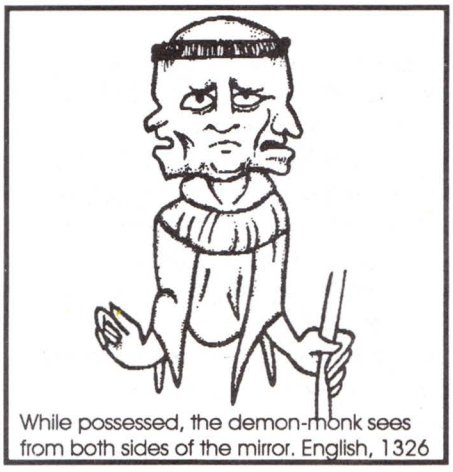
Somebody possessed of a different language that mirrors a different perception of nature, might make the observation that our need to gather data is always going to reflect a quite parallel need to exploit that data. It is another way of pointing out that knowledge is power and not wisdom. Or this one: no matter what any biologist might insist we all believe about the objectivity of his/her data-collecting methodology, the perceptions of scientists are caught in the same subjective loop as the rest of us. Science mirrors culture mirrors language mirrors perception. Everything

Game
Game
Game

recognizing your own personal role within that looming crisis. That recognition also leads to the inevitable conclusion that you may soon have to transform your most basic perceptions about language, politics, and especially lifestyle.

But who dares to change their life in order to facilitate a less needy relationship to that tongue twister called anthropocentrism? Go ahead, turn a corner into a land full of carnival mirrors only to realize that, yes, of course, all those distorted reflections exhibit our culture's insuperable yearning to promote growth under any condition? We love our quantities and we love to watch them grow. But look beyond the mirrors. Everything grows but nature herself. And everywhere; yes everywhere; nature is in full retreat.

Let's focus a moment longer on the mirror that distorts policy reflecting perception. It hints at a perception (a language) about nature that does not necessarily demand any sense of firsthand interconnectedness. Is it any wonder that the secondhand perceptions our legislators too often utilize to mold policy sometimes leads to such appalling events as the aerial shooting of wolves, the heating of the atmosphere to life-threatening levels, the nuclear stockpile. These are strange times, and the second hand connections we accept as normal are truly bizarre. For example, regard our society's desire to virtually annihilate pelagic dolphins in the cause of feeding tuna fish to our pets and our children. Or that the State of Oregon paints an enormous old-growth tree on its license plate while simultaneously legislating to destroy just about all the old growth within its jurisdiction – and within our lifetime. Call it biomepsychosis.



While possessed, the demon-monk sees from both sides of the mirror. English, 1326

But what am I really asking of our legislators? That they acknowledge their own inability to govern a nature that is not also a synonym for natural resources? Demanding that they acknowledge the impasse, and then let the now-unregulated commercial interests simply go ahead and kill off the last dolphins, wolves, and Port Orford Cedars? In the end, any expert who steps forward to answer those kind of questions is no expert at all.

Some call it a hopeless insanity and so turn their back on the entire system. Others indicate that the culture is too deeply entrenched in its bad habits and so continue with their own personalized bad habits as if one person could never make any difference.

Nordic Rune: "Induces madness"

Earthday teaches us to declare: "I beg to differ." The symptoms of our crisis cut right across all aspects of culture: including legislators, commercial interests, the experts, you and I. And like the Buddhist concept of the Boddhisattava, no one is going to get out of here unscathed until everyone gets enlightened. The environmental crisis set before us is a crisis in perception. It begins and ends inside each one of us. We act connected when we get connected. We get connected when we act connected.

II- The Seventh Generation

Regard the forum of Iroquois tribal government. Whenever the Iroquois held a council meeting, they first spoke an invocation:

In our every deliberation we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.

Thereafter, any vote among the living council members also included an equal vote for the needs and dignity of those who would live 150 to 200 years in the future.

The Iroquois would have probably agreed with Marshall MacLuhan when he wrote that the medium is the message. In this case, the generational format of their council defined a longterm relationship between government and nature. The rights of future generations never became an issue of policy because it was, instead, the context of policy. Conservation was the foundation upon which their culture was built. And, as everywhere else, policy reflected perceptions.

In the process of blueprinting our own American system of government, Thomas Jefferson was said to have drawn much inspiration from the structure of Iroquois democracy. It makes one wonder about things that might have been. For example, how would our own lives be different today if Jefferson had written the rights of the seventh generation into the U.S. bill of rights? Potentially, we might not have a Greenhouse Effect looming over all our lives. Imagine the current US Congress establishing a land policy fit for the seventh generation? Instead, too much of contemporary legislation clearly favors the perceptual extinction of our own great -great- great -great grandchildren. The old growth continues to fall at alarming rates, the dolphins and wolves, etc. etc. continue to perish. And policies pertinent to the seventh generation are nowhere to be found.

For example, here in my own state of Washington, the legislature recently passed a measure placing a fourteen month moratorium on any court challenges against the current deplorable management of federal forest lands. The bill was passed for the sole purpose of handcuffing environmental advocates while assuring clear sailing for the timber interests who are busy clearcutting the *last* of our old growth forests. Some crazy policy.

Obviously, a majority of the politicians in Olympia have their ears tuned only to the heavy metal of the economic few. They are deaf to the whispery songs sung by the seventh generation. Earthday tells us that we have to start electing politicians possessed of better hearing.

III- biomepsychosis and its Cure.

Such examples make me wonder if the stewardship of "the all and the everything", as Gurdjieff inadvertently defined ecology, might be far better served by our philosophers, native shamans, deep ecologists, musicians, dancers, and poets. These so-called dreamers possess a language capable of describing the whole because, unlike the ruling technocrats, they do not also try to stand outside of it. They bring no shopping list to the task. In other words, they comprehend the key difference between nature and natural resources.

In that light, permit me to put on a straight face and boldly suggest that the culture's relationship to nature will improve dramatically on the day that Senate subcommittees about land use start consulting with these people as a matter of course. Let us address our best dreamers as wisemen and wisewomen – and then calmly elevate them to the critical position currently occupied by the technocrats: that of defining and explaining nature for the rest of us. Actually, modern Western culture may be unique in not already doing so. And we suffer for it.

We are not wise because, instead, we are addicts. Consider this recent statement by Gar Smith, writing in **The Earth Island Journal** about the devastation wreaked by the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound:

As the damages mount with each new outrage, oil company officials are beginning to sound like problem drinkers who continue making promises they cant keep. How many more times are we going to allow these companies to throw up on our living room rug before we draw the line? Oil-hauling, like alcoholism is a form of addictive behavior that is inevitably destructive. When will we be ready to renounce the pleasures of petroleum.

Earthday is one signpost of a revolution in environmental activism that simmers all about us. It offers a cure founded upon the relationship that necessarily connects the self-destructive alcoholic to his co-dependents (meaning most of the rest of us). The same old story as told by any industrial mastodon that possesses too much marketing momentum to the detriment of the seventh generation. It explains, for example, how a sober spokeperson for the apple industry can defend the spraying of Alar (in a statement that echoes Snow White's wicked witch) by stating: "We are forced to grow the best fruit we can". He makes a point. The environmental crisis is the effect of our preferences; Biomepsychosis its cause.

Here is the same old story of power companies spending more money on oil exploration in the Arctic than on cheap, decentralized, solar energy alternatives. Listen up Exxon. If you think you had a tough job mitigating the public relations disaster of Prince William Sound, then just wait until you see the hall of mirrors that Earthday has just started to market. The gas-buying public peeks inside only to see itself reflected back as a society of addicts on the verge of overdose. Call it the *other* war on drugs.

And realize that the identity crisis that goes along with it is going to ruin your forecasts about longterm growth just as assuredly as the animal rights community ruined the fur industry. Why not start promoting solar alternatives? And while you're at it, why don't you subsidise your middle management to go sit on a rock out in the middle of a caribou herd for a few weeks.

Let me to repeat one more time: the environmental crisis begins and ends inside each one of us. We alter the equation when we alter our own relationship to the planet. We get connected when we act connected. Changed perceptions change policy. Meanwhile, out here in my own rural county, some contorted soul has started using the endangered trumpeter swans for target practice. Four dead in two weeks. Last winter we had 15 swans on the local pond, this winter there are none. It makes the seventh generation, yours and mine, break down and weep.

Or a more general example. The issue of *Time* magazine that celebrated the environment as "man of the Year" used up 16,000 trees. Here's a case of synonyms translated into magazine policy: good writing that leads to good rationalizing. Hold up a mirror that reflects the timely content of *Time* magazine as a crafty disguise invented by anthropocentric publishers to mask the

Adapted from the Divine Comedy: Inferno, Canto XIII

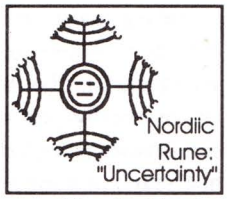
Dante and Virgil, traveling through the seventh circle of Hell, enter the wood of the Christian suicides. These men and woman have been transformed into trees because they abused their powers of movement to deprive themselves of what once distinguished themselves from the plants.

We entered a wood unmarked by any path. The foliage was not green, but of a dark color, the branches not smooth, but knotted and twisty...I heard moans on every side yet saw no one to make them, so that I believed the voices came from people hidden among the brush. Then I stretched forth my hand, and plucked a branch from a great thorn tree, and its trunk cried out, "why do you break me? Have you no trace of pity?" The twig grew dark with blood where I had torn it. I let the twig fall and stood like one afraid...Then my guide asked "tell us, imprisoned spirit, how your soul became bound up in these branches." The tree soon lamented, "Once, all the trees in this wood were men. When the fierce soul leaves a body from which it has willingly torn itself, it falls into this wood where it soon sprouts like a grain of wheat. Here, it grows into a tree. Our leaves eaten by birds. Know that one day we return to reclaim our old bodies. But not to live our lives over again, for one can not get back that which was once rejected. Instead, we drag our useless bodies into these sad woods where they hang like fruit from our thorny branches, forever.

fact that they are causing the same death of forests they condemn so soundly.

Yet all the pessimistic doomsayers seem to agree that when we cut down too many trees, all the oxygen-breathers of the planet are going to suffocate. The medieval Catholic Church prophesized an inside-out version of this same dilemma [see sidebar] when they taught that all the souls of all the human suicides are eventually going to end up as trees flourishing in a special grove in Hell. What goes around, comes around.

And the seventh generation is wondering if you have it within yourself to break the cycle of addiction co-dependency. Go ahead, write a letter to every single one of those glossy magazines you now receive. Demand that they switch over to recycled paper within a reasonable period of time, say two years. If you don't get a letter of intent back from them, cancel your subscription. Or doesn't it matter? As I say, ecology teaches us that everything inside the loop is everything inside the loop. You *are* a tree. Am I getting too mystical to ask you what it feels like to be a tree? I even offer two too-clever ways to find out. Either commit suicide by promoting clearcuts, or start acting as if the seventh generation lives inside your heart.



It may take such a leap of imagination to cajole the kind of personal committment needed to elicit change. Persevere. It matters. For example, after taking the plunge to print this little newsletter on recycled paper, I soon learned that most paper manufacturers will neither promote nor develop recycled products until they have exhausted the established method of clearcutting forests. It also means that recycled paper currently costs more money than cut-down-the-forest paper although it takes much less energy to produce. Perhaps stranger still, only an innocent finds that fact startling.

The seventh generation begs you to change your stationary. And while you're at it, double your efforts to get off all those junk mailing lists. I am now embroiled in the Herculean proccess of accomplishing that last one, and let me warn you in advance that the task may be just about as onerous as lobbying congress to reintroduce wolves into Yellowstone.

This newsletter is sent out to the editors of at least 50 other journals and magazines. Listen up. Earthday implores each of you publishers to make that same pledge to the trees. I also must confess here to being especially tired of all those animal rights and environmental magazines printed on glossy paper. Get with it. There is simply no excuse for not making the switch. And while you're making the switch, get rid of those plastic mailing wrappers.

IV- Everywhen

This Earthday issue of the Interspecies Newsletter is not focusing upon communication between species. Or is it? After all, the mirrors show us that interspecies language equals interspecies perceptions equals interspecies policy. A direct link exists between our personal perceptions about the sentience of animals and the way the English language, itself, colors those perceptions. Choose your synonyms – are animals *people* and *neighbors* or are they *specimen* and *subjects*? This newsletter obviously chooses the former. That unorthodox choice means that I, as editor, have learned to grow comfortable within my provocateur's role of naturalist/jester amidst all of the data-collecting objectivists who currently monopolize the ungenerous explanation of animal sentience to the culture. Who speaks for the seventh generation of loons(7 years), cedar trees (up to 2000 years), fruit flies(a few weeks), orcas(70 years)? Let's strip Abraham Lincoln of his anthropocentric rhetoric and truly make a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

Which leads to a word from our sponsor. Politicians promote nuclear reactors that provide power for 30 years, and poisonous waste for 250,000 years. Meanwhile, groups like **The Rocky Mountain Institute** offer convincing evidence that we co-dependents would abrogate the presumed need for more nuclear power plants by simply curtailing our own exorbitant consumption of electricity. They prescribe an immediate switch to efficient lightbulbs, which are already available, although, once again, not promoted. And naturally, overpriced. Perhaps not coincidentally, one of the very best sources for low-wattage lightbulbs as well as recycled stionary is a mail order house calling itself **The Seventh Generation.**

Or save the dolphins: stop eating tuna fish. The environmental group, **EarthTrust** is currently beseeching certain tuna companies to stick uncompromising advertisements on their cans stating that the tuna inside was not caught at the expense of dolphins.

Or stop future oil exploration in borderline areas like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge by using public transportation while concomitantly investing in a car that gets 5 miles per gallon more than your present car. Walk more, nurture your health. **The Worldwatch Institute** recommends that all countries institute a 50 MPG efficiency for new automobiles and reach that figure by the year 2000.

Or vegetarian advocate, John Robbins, argues in Diet for a New America that the simple act of not eating fast-food hamburgers, (often made from beef raised in Central America) might preserve more rain forest than if you donated that same $2 to any environmental organization you can name. Or let's get heretical. How many of us co-dependents have ever bothered to ask those environmental groups we support so dutifully, just how many trees they had to cut down to print those 2 million pieces of direct mail we all receive 6 or more times a year?

Or another: as much as 85% of all topsoil loss in the USA can be directly attributed to livestock raising. Rid all red meat from your diet and you help save everything nourished by topsoil including, well, just about everything that lives. Ironically, as the effects of this committment to diet spins outward, you also combat a veritable host of inward-facing maladies including colon cancer and heart disease – both of which are directly attributed to a heavy meat diet.

When you take a stand for topsoil, you heal yourself. You *are* topsoil. What's it feel like?

Mask of the mudman
Asaro, New Guinea

V- Disguises Revealed

David Guss, in his **Language of the Birds,** reports that certain traditional peoples believe that the part of an animal we see is not the real part but only a disguise; an outfit he or she puts on when it visits our manmade world. Once home again, the animals take off their costumes, look in the mirror and see themselves reflected back exactly the same as a human would look without his or her costume. But, you may well ask, what do they look like? Easy. The same as you without your costume?

When this seemingly bizarre perception of animals starts to settle in, it puts an unmistakable damper on what might have otherwise been an edifying visit to the zoo, or an evening spent in front of the TUBE watching *National Geographic Specials*. We suddenly recognize that almost none of us has ever even seen a wild animal in the traditional sense of the word. The "nature" that we moderns perceive so intensely as a resource, traditional peoples primarily perceived as a neighborhood. As always, perception reflects policy. And vice versa.

Regard, for example, the environmental policies established by Australian Aborigines. Richard Murphy, writing in **The Cousteau Society Newsletter,** traces the 40,000 year continuity of Aboriginal culture, whose very primitive lifestyle has demonstrated almost no negative impact upon its shared environment in all that timespan. After spending an extended period working in the Outback, Murphy returned to contemporary culture only to be faced with this uneasy conclusion:

One of my lingering reentry questions has been: can we call a human system, whether it be a civilization or a culture, successful if it creates the potential to bring about its own demise and incurs in its decline greater hardship and misery than existed before its development? History shows that civilizations are not enduring human systems. From an evolutionary point of view, the fact that Aborigines still exist demonstrates that their culture and survival strategies have some redeeming qualities.

Perhaps the Aborigines have even found the holy telephone for speaking directly to the seventh generation. Actually, the key element of their spirituality is known as the *Dreamtime*, which has been described as a perception of past, present, and future unfolding all at the same moment. Poet Gary Snyder has described it as an *everywhen*.

Although we must incorporate parts of the surrealistic spiritual wisdom of the Aborigines into any general recipe for our own cultural transformation, it does not mean that we also ask anyone to voluntarily give up their hot water heaters, their underwear, and their laser printers. Murray Bookchin, for one, chides what he considers to be an eco-lala sentiment of finding solutions that demand a regression back to the primitive lifestyle. Writing in The Whole Earth Review he concludes that it is a "holism that evaporates into a mystical sigh." Instead, he offers this practical advice:

Indeed, there is a level at which our consciousness must be neither poetry nor science, but a transcendence of both into a new realm of theory and practice, an artfulness that combines fancy with reason, imagination with logic, vision with technique...Poetry and imagination must be integrated with science and technology, for we have evolved beyond an innocence that can be nourished exclusively by myths and dreams.

VI- The Woodcutter's Mask

The seventh generation is asking us to combine fancy with reason. Consider, for example, the Cree Indian belief that stories are animate beings who ordinarily inhabit a kind of oral Limbo. They sit around and tell each other to each other, waiting on call as it were, for that special circumstance in need of illumination.

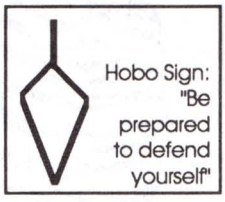
Realize that, and then absorb this true story about the Bengali woodcutters who recently discovered that wearing masks on the backs of their heads prevents tiger attacks? In an area where tigers have always killed about 60 people a year, no one wearing a mask has yet been killed. This means that tigers are no longer shot on sight. Does it also mean that we draw a happy moral about tigers

Constance Perenyi

and humans coexisting in peace? Not exactly, because almost all stories like this one have a trick ending. In this case, when the woodcutter's put on their disguises, the clearcutting of the rainforest advances at a much faster pace.

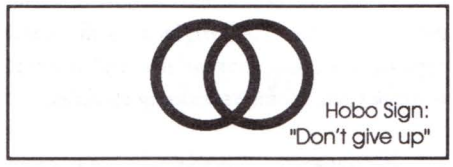
The Cree believe that stories such as this one are not so much told, as they are coaxed out of hibernation. And the gift must keep moving, meaning that the story has now grabbed a hold of you as well. There it will dwell for a time, perhaps change its wardrobe of a word here, a phrase there, as it acclimates to its new surroundings. Finally, it will either drift back to story limbo, or be passed on in those new clothes when you tell it to somebody else. The Cree believe that a three-way symbiotic relationship unfolds between storyteller, story, and listener. Ultimately, if people nourish a story properly, it tells them useful things about life. It's yours. May you use it in the cause of tigers.

However, let this story about stories also serve as a warning. A significant part of the culture has forgotten that they hold any inherent responsibility to the stories they invite in. Regard this lapse as one more symptom of our addiction co-dependency: this time disguised in the form of the hard sell, multi-billion dollar advertising industry of Madison Avenue; a tool capable of drilling through even the thickest human skull; and founded upon the anti-Cree premise that we have no accountability to the stories we animate. Watch a five year old in front of a television set on any Saturday morning, and realize that these are the stories inhabiting our children.


Hobo Sign: "Be prepared to defend yourself"

The seventh generation scrutinizes the current culture's inability to penetrate its own disconnectedness, and silently shudders. Yet they seem quite incapable of doing much of anything on their own behalf. They remain seated along the temporal sidelines, holding their collective breath, waiting in anticipation, watching how our future (yours and mine) is going to transmute into their present. They fall down on their knees before us, pleading with us to undertake the monumental task of changing the way we perceive them. Do you hear them?

Listen closely. Their singing is really not much more than a low whisper, a low pulse, not unlike your own heartbeat, or perhaps like the background hum of the big bang. And just like the big bang, just like the human heartbeat, the seventh generation is singing its quiet song just about everywhere these days. Everywhen. Teach yourself how to listen. Start today. And never forget that the process of learning to hear these songs has always been the primary goal of Earthday. Good luck to you.


Hobo Sign: "Don't give up"

—Jim Nollman

This piece will also be published in a forthcoming issue of E Magazine, PO Box 6667, Syracuse, NY 13217.

Quoted Resources:

- *Earth Island Journal*, 300 Broadway, #28, San Francisco, CA 94133
- *The Seventh Generation*, 10 Farrell St, S. Burlington VT 05403
- *EarthTrust*, 2500 Pali Highway, Honolulu, HI 96817
- *Rocky Mountain Institute*, 1739 Snowmass Creek Rd. Snowmass CO 81654
- *Diet for A New America*, by John Robbins, Earthsave Foundation, Box 949. Felton CA 95018
- *Language of the Birds*, by David Guss, Northpoint Press, 1985
- *Cousteau Society Newsletter*, 930 W 21st Norfolk VA 23517
- *Whole Earth Review*, 27 Gate Five Rd, Sausalito, CA 94965
- *Earthfirst!*, Box 5871 Tucson AZ 85703
- *The Green Synthesis Newsletter*, Box 1858, San Pedro CA 90733
- *The New Catalyst Journal*, PO Box 99, Lillooet BC Canada, V0K 1VO

IC News

Dolphin Council

After two years of relative inactivity in the dolphin arena, IC will be co-sponsoring an event along the Kona coast of the Big Island of Hawaii this coming April. The area is well-known for the population of relatively friendly spinner dolphins that reside just offshore. The assembled group for this project will spend two weeks interacting with these acrobatic and playful animals both acoustically and in the water. This project also has special significance for IC because it was in this same area that we first started working with dolphins way back in 1976.

The group already includes IC's Jim and Katy Nollman; Dolphin mediator at the University of Hawaii and author, Joan Ocean; Visionary dolphin artist Jean-Luc Bozzoli; Georgia Tanner who served as a board member of the Human/Dolphin foundation for many years; Sharina White who leads encounters with free-swimming dolphins through the organization, Lighthearted Touch; and British author and dolphin researcher, Peter Russell.

Since all of the principals are actively involved in the cutting edge of interspecies communication, we plan to dedicate much of our time to sharing ideas, resources, and experiences. Hopefully, this will all lead to a blueprint for a future longterm collaborative project with cetaceans. We at IC envision a future version of this seminal project that will also become available to the members of IC. Towards that end, we at IC have already started to discuss a follow-up project to be located off the coast of Baja for next winter.

Orca Project

Each august over the past twelve years, IC has mounted an expedition up to the inland waterway that separates Vancouver Island from the mainland of Canada. Over that time, we developed a unique musical rapport with the pods of orcas who frequent the area. IC chartered a large cabin cruiser each summer, while also constructing an elaborate sound system which converted that boat into an underwater recording studio. Together, boat and system permitted us a real-time acoustic access to these very vocal whales. The project eventually developed into a very amazing wilderness community of people from all walks of life, and all focused upon the relationship with the whales. Looking back, we now believe that the yearly flowering of "Orcananda," as the camp came to be called, was as much an inspiration as the unfolding relationship with the whales.

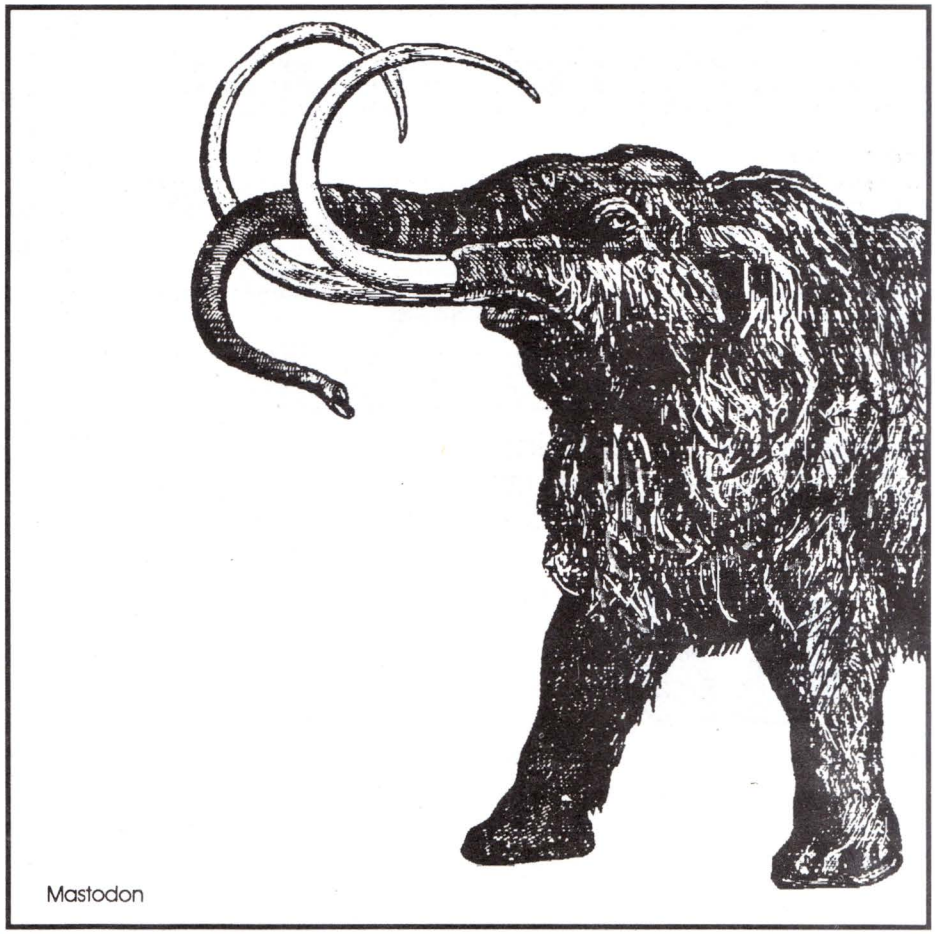
This project matured and prospered between 1984 and 1986. During that period, we all witnessed the orcas growing ever more familiar with our presence and our sounds. We settled on a general practice of anchoring our boat in one spot, and then waiting for the whales to come to us. Something worked. The interactions got more intensive, lasted longer, and became more humbling with each passing summer. There would be nights that the whales would surround our boat for hours on end, seeming to add choruses to our songs, anticipating chord changes to our melodies, and answering our rhythms on the downbeats. We invited Tibetan Lamas, non-musicians, and children into the circle just to keep the process fresh. We also noticed that it wasn't any generic "the orcas" who were responding to us, but just a few whales from two specific pods out of a population of about 100 in the area. We played the best music we knew how. We believed that the project would go on forever.

During the summer of 1987 we noticed that the process of intensification had started to reverse itself. The whales would disappear for a few days at a time, and when they came around they didn't seem to linger quite as long. The new pattern crystallized further in 1988. Then last summer the whales exited their home waters for nearly two weeks during the month of August.

The causes? It is almost certainly the same sad story of human pressures altering the habitat of wild animals. Firstly, the whale's core area is a river estuary, which is now in the process of being clearcut. The daily explosions from the construction of the logging road can be heard clearly from miles away. Secondly, 1986 saw the establishment of a whalewatching industry. Last summer, three large boats followed in close pursuit of the orcas for up to eight hours at a time. Thirdly, is the expansion of the fishing industry. There was always fishing in the area, but it used to be restricted to the opposite side of the strait from our camp. Now, up to a 500 boats fish both sides, and, naturally, every summer more whales get caught in more nets. Most interestingly, local whale researchers are also noticing that although the whales vacate the area during high summer, they seem to return during October and November. There is no whalewatching, no fishing, and little logging done during the Fall.

We have done some soul-searching and decided not to return to Orcananda next August. We broke camp last August with a ceremony marking the conclusion of eight years spent in communion with the orcas from that wondrous campsite.

But we have not yet abandoned our longterm objectives. This fall, a few of the IC core members will go exploring the coastline north of Vancouver island, with the objective of finding a new place, a new time of year, and possibly a new concept, upon which to establish the next phase of the IC orca project. Taking a cue from the orcas themselves, we seek wilderness and we seek retreat as far away as possible from the accelerated human commerce currently exploiting and degrading the formerly wild coastline of Vancouver Island.



Mastodon